GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4304
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2005
INCREASING TELE DENSITY IN INDIA
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Singh Shri Ganesh;Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the telecommunications has a crucial role in infrastructure development and growth of economy in the country;

(b) if so, whether the tele-density is very low in India as compared to other developing countries;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to increase the tele-density in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per the available information, tele-density in India is very low as compared to some of the following developing countries:

Country	Tele-density(as on 30.06.2005)
i India	9.37
ii Iran	27.14#
iii China	42.32#
iv Brazil	41.88#

#Tele-density as on December 2003.

The main reasons for low tele-density in the country are:

(i) Socio-economic conditions.

(ii) Low per capita income.

(iii) Low literacy rate.

(iv) Difficult terrain in specific states/areas such as North Eastern Region and J&K.

(v) Further, lack of infrastructure such as poor availability of power impairing the reliability of telecom services and scattered human habitations which make provisioning of telecom services techno-commercially less viable.

(d) Following are the major steps taken by the Government to increase the tele-density in the country:

(i) About 150 millions additional phones are planned to be provided during April 2005 to December 2007, by both public and private operators. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) taken together have planned to contribute about 52% (78 million) of these additional phones.

(ii) The USO Fund Administrator has finalized the agreements with four telecom service providers [BSNL, Reliance Telecom Limited, Tata Teleservices and Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra)] for provision of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (DELs) in all the 1685 net cost

positive SDCAs. Under this agreement, the service operators would provide at least 100 rural DELs by September 2005 in each of the Secondary Switching Areas (SSAs) comprising these SDCAs. As far as the remaining net cost negative (viable) SDCAs are concerned, market forces are expected to take care of the emerging demand in these areas.

(iii) Additionally, BSNL has relaxed the distance for laying outdoor cables from 2.5.Km to 5.0 Km for landline exchanges. This would facilitate larger coverage in the rural areas from existing exchanges.